

Application No. 09/491,721

Attorney Docket No. 15838-211

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

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OCT 06 2006

1. (Currently Amended): A tear-resistant laminate, comprising:
  - an elastic polymeric film having a top and a bottom surface;
  - a first nonwoven web of ~~laterally~~ heat-drawn consolidated nonelastic thermoplastic fibers and having a predefined machine direction and a predefined transverse direction, said web having an extensible elongation value in a range of from about 20% to about 200% and an ultimate force to break of greater than 1500 g/in in said transverse direction, a top surface and a bottom surface, said bottom surface of the first nonwoven web being bonded to the top surface of said elastomeric film;
  - a second nonwoven web of ~~laterally~~ heat-drawn consolidated nonelastomeric thermoplastic fibers and having predefined machine and transverse directions, a predefined extensible elongation value and an ultimate force to break value in said transverse direction that is substantially equal to said extensible elongation values and said force to break value of the first nonwoven web, a top surface and a bottom surface, said top surface of the second nonwoven web being bonded to the bottom surface of the elastomeric film; and
  - said tear resistant laminate having, in a direction aligned with the transverse direction of the first and second nonwoven webs, an elongation value greater than said extensible elongation values of the first and second webs and an ultimate force to break of at least 3000 g/in.
2. (Original): The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said first and said second nonwoven webs are formed of randomly deposited nonelastomeric

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thermoplastic fibers, at least about 10% of said fibers having approximately equal temperatures.

3. (Original): The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 2, wherein from about 2% to about 50% of said thermoplastic fibers comprising each of the first and second nonwoven webs are skewed in a direction greater than about 10° from the machine direction of the respective nonwoven web.
4. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 2, wherein said thermoplastic fibers comprising the first and second nonwoven webs have a mass divided by length value of at least about 1.5 denier.
5. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said first and second nonwoven webs are formed of randomly deposited polyolefin fibers.
6. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 5, wherein said polyolefin fibers are spun bond polypropylene fibers and said first and second webs have a basis weight of from about 14 to about 60 g/m<sup>2</sup>.
7. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said elastic polymeric film is a metallocene-based low density polyethylene film.

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8. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 7, wherein said metallocene-based low density polyethylene film has a basis weight of from about 18 g/m<sup>2</sup> to about 100 g/m<sup>2</sup>.
9. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said elastic polymeric film is a block copolymer blend.
10. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 9, wherein said elastic polymeric film has a basis weight of from about 30 g/m<sup>2</sup> to about 100 g/m<sup>2</sup>.
11. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said elastic polymeric film has elastic elongation properties greater than the extensible elongation values of the first and second nonwoven webs and a set of less than 25% when stretched 50%.
12. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said elastic polymeric film is perforated.
13. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said elastic polymeric film has a Dart Impact value of at least 400 g.
14. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the bond between the bottom surface of the first nonwoven web and the top surface of the elastic

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polymeric film, and the bond between the top surface of the second nonwoven web and the bottom surface of the elastic polymeric film each comprise a mutually bonded surface area between respective contiguous web and film surfaces of at least 3.0% of the total contiguous surface area.

15. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said first nonwoven web comprises a composite structure formed of two or more layers of a nonwoven fabric bonded together.
16. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said second nonwoven web comprises a composite structure formed of two or more layers of a nonwoven fabric bonded together.
17. (Original) The tear resistant laminate, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said elastic polymeric film comprises a plurality of layers of elastic polymeric film, said top surface of the elastic polymeric film being the top surface of the uppermost layer of the plurality of layers, and said bottom surface of the elastic polymeric film being the bottom surface of the lowermost layer of the plurality of layers.

Claims 18-24 (canceled).

25. (Currently Amended): A product incorporating a tear-resistant laminate, the tear-resistant laminate comprising:

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an elastic polymeric film;

a first nonwoven web bonded to a first surface of the elastic polymeric film, the first nonwoven web formed of nonelastic thermoplastic fibers and having a machine direction and a transverse direction, wherein the first nonwoven web has been set in a heat-drawn, transversely consolidated state before being bonded to the elastic polymeric film; and

a second nonwoven web bonded to a second surface of the elastic polymeric film opposite the first surface, the second nonwoven web formed of nonelastic thermoplastic fibers and having a machine direction and a transverse direction, wherein the second nonwoven web has been set in a heat-drawn, transversely consolidated state before being bonded to the elastic polymeric film.

26. (Previously presented) The product of claim 25 wherein the first nonwoven web has an ultimate force to break of greater than 1500 g/in in said transverse direction.
27. (Previously presented) The product of claim 25 wherein the tear-resistant laminate has an ultimate force to break of greater than 3000 g/in in said transverse direction.
28. (Previously presented) The product of claim 25 wherein the tear-resistant laminate has an ultimate force to break of greater than 4000 g/in in said transverse direction.
29. (Previously presented) The product of claim 25 wherein the elastic polymeric film has a dart impact value of at least 400 g.

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30. (Currently Amended) A tear-resistant laminate, comprising:

at least two heat-drawn consolidated nonwoven webs formed of nonelastic thermoplastic fibers and having a predefined machine direction and a predefined transverse direction, said webs having an extensible elongation value in a range of from about 20% to about 200% and an ultimate force to break of greater than 1500 g/in. in said transverse direction;

an elastic polymeric film having a top and a bottom surface, with at least one of said at least two nonwoven webs being bonded to said top surface, and with at least a second of said at least two nonwoven webs being bonded to said bottom surface; and

with wherein said tear resistant laminate having a combined laminate ultimate force to break of at least the combined values of said at least two nonwoven webs.

Claims 31 – 32 (cancelled).